

ACTIVIST NEWS

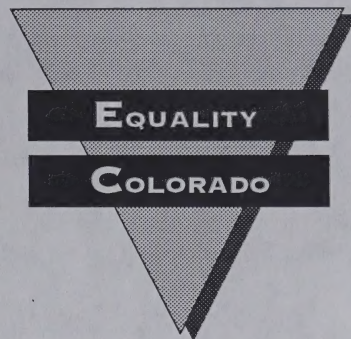
A PUBLICATION OF EQUALITY COLORADO

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HAWAII VICTORY • ALOHA, COLORADO!

Judge Chang's ruling on December 3 that the state of Hawaii did not provide a compelling justification to deny same-sex couples marriage licenses was truly historic. It means we are that much further along in our battle for equal rights for all people. However, it also means that we must work that much harder here to make sure that the freedoms we are winning in Hawaii are not discarded in Colorado. Already, State Representative Marilyn Musgrave (R-Ft. Morgan) has promised to reintroduce the bill that Gov. Romer vetoed last year denying recognition to legally married same-sex couples. We must fight this tooth and nail.

The Colorado Marriage Rights Project is putting together an action kit called "Aloha, Colorado!" In it you'll find: an analysis of what the Hawaii decision means for the ongoing struggle for the freedom to marry; suggestions for talking with religious communities about the issue; fact sheets about marriage rights; instructions on giving a Marriage House Party; and much, much more!

ACTION!

- ▶ Call, write, or email us for your copy of the Aloha, Colorado! action kit
- ▶ Write a letter to your local newspaper **today**, applauding Judge Chang's decision, and deploring Rep. Musgrave's continued attacks on gay, lesbian, and bisexual people.

Three Bills to Work On for Legislative Session

This year the Colorado legislature will be working on passing a statewide GLBT civil rights bill and a hate crimes bill. They'll also debate Musgrave's marriage non-recognition bill. To succeed on any of these, we'll need full participation and input from **you**!

Among the ways you can be involved:

- responding to alerts by phone, mail, and email, before crucial votes;
- attending a Lobby Day or other visibility activities during the session;
- putting together testimony using legal and other kinds of research, and personal stories (see below).

ACTION!

- ▶ Now is the time to put together a **PHONE TREE** of your organizational members, your friends, anyone you can think of. When a bill has an important committee hearing or vote, we need to make sure calls are made!

Personal Stories Needed for Session

As we prepare for the 1997 legislative session, our biggest need is for stories that we can share with legislators to personalize the issues they'll see.

- for our **statewide civil rights** bill we'll need personal stories of sexual orientation discrimination in employment, housing, and/or public accommodations;
- for our **Hate Crimes** bill, we need incidents of anti-GLB attacks;
- to fight the **anti-marriage** bill, we'll need stories and photos of couples who share their lives without any rights or benefits that come with marriage.

ACTION!

- ▶ Write down your personal story and send it to Equality Lobby, P.O. Box 300476, Denver, CO 80203.
- ▶ Encourage your friends and loved ones to do the same.

Gunnison to look at civil rights ordinance

The Gunnison City Council has been presented with a proposal to prohibit workplace, housing, and public accommodations discrimination based on sexual orientation. They will be taking the issue up in January. Currently, five municipalities in the state forbid sexual orientation discrimination: Aspen, Boulder, Crested Butte, Denver, and Telluride. No ordinance has been passed since shortly after the Amendment 2 election. Ft. Collins is considering similar legislation.

New Cheiftan Couples Policy

The Pueblo *Cheiftan* has developed a policy whereby they will announce same-sex unions like they do different-sex weddings. The only difference will be that since same-sex couples are not legally allowed to marry, the announcements will appear in the Lifestyle section separate from the wedding announcements. Already, the union of Warren Evans and David Hackenberry was printed.

ACTION! The same thing can (and should) happen in *your* community. Contact your paper and ask them about their policy on this issue. If they refuse same-sex couples, encourage them to change it (through letters to the editor, editorial board meetings, etc.) If their policy is on-target now, let us know about it!

Attorneys -- pass this on!

The GLBT Legal Coalition, a joint project of Equality Colorado, Colorado Legal Initiatives Project, ACLU of Colorado, and the Colorado Lesbian and Gay Law Association, have put together a survey (included in this mailing) for legal professionals to try to help each of our organizations. Equality can use the help both for our legislative work and for our Anti-Violence Project.

ACTION! If you are an attorney, law student, paralegal, or can otherwise help us out on this project, please fill this out and return it to us. If you aren't, please pass it on to someone you know who can help us out.

Same-sex DV Awareness

The Gay Lesbian Bisexual Domestic Violence Prevention Task Force and the Anti-Violence Project have teamed together in a campaign against domestic violence. This will entail a poster campaign, press releases, and information pamphlets for service providers.

ACTION! Volunteer for the Anti-Violence Project (crisis line or administrative), assist with disseminating the information, or call the crisis line (303-852-5094) if anyone you know is in a violent relationship.

News and Updates

The Colorado Legal Initiatives Project, the organization that coordinated the fight against Amendment 2 in the courts, has hired a legal manager/executive director. Julie Tolleson will help guide the organization as it moves towards working on cases. Welcome, Julie! ...

Nabozny gets filthy rich. A Wisconsin jury found Jamie Nabozny's Ashland, Wisconsin school system and its administrators guilty of failing to protect Nabozny from harassment establishing a first-ever precedent on the rights of lesbian and gay students in K-12 schools. Nabozny was awarded \$900,000 in the decision....

DORNAN OUTED from office. Democrat Loretta Sanchez was officially declared the winner of the Orange County race for U.S. Representative by only a few hundred votes, after surviving a recount effort by her opponent, the most anti of anti-gays Robert Dornan.

Dornan's rantings against the rights of glbt people and people with AIDS earned him a strong base of enemies throughout the country -- even in the conservative Orange County.... **Dr. Evelyn Hooker**, whose landmark 1957 study of gay men showed that homosexuals were not inherently abnormal, has died at the age of 89. Her study helped the American Psychiatric Association strike homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders in 1973.... **Jonathan Schmitz** was sentenced to 25-50 years, following prosecutors' recommendations, in the killing of Scott Amadure on March 9, 1995. The case had a high profile because both men had appeared on an unaired episode of the "Jenny Jones" show about Secret Crushes.... **A judge in Gainesville, Fla.** ruled on November 22 that Alachua County's anti-gay charter amendment is unconstitutional in light of the Romer v. Evans decision. The Alachua amendment was the last remaining law in the US to prohibit the enactment of equal rights protection for citizens on the basis of sexual orientation.

Upcoming Events

Biblical Self-Defense Workshop: January 11, 9 am - 1 pm, we will explore the six scriptural references to same-sex behavior and discuss ways to respond to those who believe the Bible holds an anti-GLB perspective. More importantly, we will discuss the positive view of human relationships and justice found in the Bible. Please call Laurene at Equality (303) 839-5540 to register and/or for more information.

Voices of Faith Interfaith Worship Service will be January 23, 7:00 pm at Park Hill Congregational Church, 2600 Leyden in Denver. All are welcome!